

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended): ~~An~~A method for sending an E-mail sending method—wherein an agent is displayed on a screen and the behavior of the agent is managed by agent parameters ;

and wherein on accepting a sending command for commanding sending of an E-mail, agent parameters determining the behavior of the agent are annexed to the main text of the mail having an appended mail header for sending the E-mail;

and wherein after the E-mail is sent, the agent is set to be absent until a pre-set time elapses.

2. (currently amended): The method for sending an E-mail as claimed in claim 1 wherein ~~a single E mail is sent by a single agent~~the agent parameters determining the behavior of the agent are automatically generated after lapse of the pre-set time.

3. (currently amended): The method ~~of claim 1 wherein the agent parameters determining the behavior of the agent include the sending date and time information and can be annexed to the main text of an E mail sent next after lapse of pre set time based on the sending date and time information~~for sending an E-mail as claimed in claim 1 wherein a single E-mail is sent by a single agent.

4. (currently amended): The method ~~of~~for sending an E-mail as claimed in claim 32 wherein, ~~by receiving the agent parameters determining the agent parameter, automatically returned from the destination, the 20 agent parameters~~behavior of the agent include the sending date and time information and can be annexed to the main text of an E-mail sent next after lapse of the pre-set time based on the sending date and time information.

5. (currently amended): ~~The method for sending an E-mail as claimed in claim 1 wherein a sending command for designating sending an E-mail by a single agent and a sending command for designating sending plural E-mails by a single agent are selectively accepted; and wherein on accepting the sending command for designating sending an E-mail by a single agent,~~ wherein the agent parameters determining the agent behavior are annexed to the main text of the E-mail for sending the E-mail are changed by learning function.

6. (currently amended): ~~An E-mail sending apparatus, comprising an agent manager for displaying an agent on a screen and for managing the behavior of the agent depending on agent parameters;~~ The method for sending an E-mail as claimed in claim 1 wherein the behavior of the agent is managed by the agent parameters including environmental information.

~~sending command accepting means for accepting a sending command designating sending an E-mail; and~~

~~mail sending means which, on accepting a sending command designating sending an E-mail by said sending command accepting means, is controlled by said agent manager for appending the agent parameters determining the behavior of the agent to the mail header or to an annexed main text of the E-mail for sending the E-mail.~~

7. (currently amended): ~~The apparatus of claim 6 wherein said agent manager sends an E-mail by the single agent from said mail sending means.~~ The method for sending an E-mail as claimed in claim 1 wherein a sending command for designating sending an E-mail by a single agent and a sending command for designating sending plural E-mails by a single agent are selectively accepted; and wherein on accepting the sending command for designating sending an E-mail by a single agent, the agent parameters determining the agent behavior are annexed to the main text of the E-mail for sending the E-mail.

8. (currently amended): ~~The apparatus of~~ method for sending an E-mail as claimed in claim 6 wherein said agent parameters determining the behavior of the agent includes the sending date and time information; and wherein said agent manager

~~can append~~ wherein when the agent whose behavior is determined by the agent parameters ~~to the main text of an~~ is absent, the E-mail is sent next by said mail sending means after lapse of a pre-set time as from the sending date and time based on the sending date and time information by the agent which can be designated sending plural E-mails.

9. (currently amended): ~~The apparatus of claim 8 wherein said agent manager receives the~~ An E-mail sending method wherein an agent is displayed on a screen and the behavior of the agent is managed by agent parameters;

and wherein on accepting a sending command for commanding sending of an E-mail, agent parameters determining the agent behavior, automatically returned from the destination, so that said agent parameters can be behavior of the agent are annexed to the main text of the mail having an E-mail sent next by said mail sending means; appended mail header for sending the E-mail;

and wherein after the E-mail is sent, the agent is set to be absent until the agent parameters are sent back from a recipient of the E-mail.

10. (currently amended): ~~The apparatus of claim 6 wherein said sending command accepting means selectively accepts a sending command for designating sending of a single E-mail by a single agent or a sending command for designating sending of a plurality of E-mails by a single agent and wherein on accepting the sending command for designating sending an E-mail by a single agent, said agent manager annexes the agent parameters determining the agent behavior to the main text of the E-mail by said mail sending means for sending the E-mail; method for sending an E-mail as claimed in claim 9 wherein the agent parameters sent are changed and the agent parameters thus changed are sent back from the recipient.~~

11. (currently amended): ~~A~~ The method for receiving an E-mail, wherein sending an E-mail as claimed in claim 9 wherein an absent state of the agent is set by a flag showing the agent is absent or not.

an E-mail is received on accepting a reception command designating reception of an E-mail; and wherein

~~the behavior of an agent is controlled responsive to agent parameters annexed to the received main text of the mail for displaying the agent on a screen.~~

12. (currently amended): ~~An apparatus for receiving an E-mail, comprising:~~

~~reception command accepting means for accepting a command for receiving an E-mail;~~

~~reception means for receiving an E-mail on accepting the reception command commanding reception of the E-mail by said reception command accepting means; and an agent manager for controlling the behavior of the agent responsive to agent parameters~~The method for sending an E-mail as claimed in claim 9 wherein a sending command for designating sending an E-mail by a single agent and a sending command for designating sending plural E-mails by a single agent are selectively accepted; and wherein on accepting the sending command for designating sending an E-mail by a single agent, the agent parameters determining the agent behavior are annexed to the main text of the E-mail received by said reception means for displaying for sending the agent on a screen~~E-mail.~~

13. (currently amended): ~~The apparatus~~method ~~for receiving~~for sending an E-mail as claimed in claim 12 wherein ~~said agent manager automatically transmits when the agent whose behavior is determined by the agent parameters annexed to the main text of the mail received by said reception means is absent, the E-mail is sent by the agent which can be designated sending plural E-mails.~~

14. (currently amended): ~~A method for sending/receiving an~~An E-mail sending method wherein an agent is displayed on a screen and the behavior of the agent is managed by agent parameters;

~~and wherein~~ on accepting a sending command for commanding sending of an E-mail, agent parameters determining the behavior of the agent are annexed to the main text of the mail having an appended mail header for sending the E-mail;

~~and wherein if the agent parameters are not sent back within a pre-set time, the agent parameters are automatically generated, and the agent is set to be absent after the E-mail is sent until the agent parameters are automatically generated; if the agent~~

parameters are sent back within the pre-set time, the agent is set to be absent after the E-mail is sent until the agent parameters are sent back from a recipient of the E-mail;

~~an E-mail is received on accepting a reception command designating reception of an E-mail and the behavior of an agent is controlled responsive to agent parameters annexed to the received main text of the mail for displaying the agent on a screen.~~

and wherein a single E-mail is sent by a single agent.

15. (currently amended): The method for sending/~~receiving~~ an E-mail as claimed in claim 14 wherein ~~a single E-mail is sent by a single agent~~the agent parameters sent are changed and the agent parameters thus changed are sent back from the recipient.

16. (currently amended): The method ~~for sending an E-mail as claimed in claim 14~~15 wherein the agent parameters ~~determining the behavior of the agent include the sending date and time information based on which the agent parameters can be annexed to the main text of an E-mail sent next after lapse of a pre-set time~~are changed by learning function.

17. (currently amended): The method ~~for sending an E-mail as claimed in claim 16~~ wherein, ~~by receiving the agent parameters determining the behavior of the agent, it becomes possible to annex the agent parameters to the main text of the E-mail sent next~~14 wherein an absent state of the agent is set by a flag showing the agent is absent or not.

18. (currently amended): ~~The method of claim 14 wherein a sending command for designating sending of a single E-mail by a single agent and a sending command for designating sending of a plurality of E-mails by a single agent are selectively accepted and wherein~~A method for sending an E-mail wherein an agent is displayed on a screen and the behavior of the agent is managed by agent parameters;

and wherein on accepting the~~a~~ sending command for ~~designating~~commanding sending of an E-mail ~~by a single agent, the~~ agent parameters determining the agent behavior of the agent are annexed to the main text of the E-mail having an appended mail header for sending the E-mail;

and wherein after the E-mail is sent, the agent is made not to send the E-mail;
and wherein a single E-mail is sent by a single agent.

19. (currently amended): ~~An apparatus~~The method for sending/receiving an E-mail, comprising: ~~an agent manager for displaying an agent on a screen and for managing the~~ 20 behavior of said agent responsive to agent parameters; ~~sending command accepting means for accepting said sending command~~ an E-mail as claimed in claim 18 wherein a sending command for designating sending an E-mail; ~~mail sending means which, on accepting said sending command designating sending an E-mail by said sending command accepting means, annexes~~ by a single agent and a sending command for designating sending plural E-mails by a single agent are selectively accepted; and wherein on accepting the sending command for designating sending an E-mail by a single agent, the agent parameters determining the agent behavior are annexed to the main text of a ~~the E-mail having an appended mail header for sending the E-mail;~~

~~reception command accepting means for accepting a reception command designating the reception of an E-mail; and~~ receiving means for receiving an E-mail on accepting a reception command designating the reception of the E-mail by said reception command accepting means.

20. (currently amended): ~~The apparatus of claim 19~~ An apparatus for sending an E-mail, comprising:

an agent manager for displaying an agent on a screen and for managing the behavior of the agent depending on agent parameters;

a sending command accepting means for accepting a sending command designating sending an E-mail; and

a mail sending means which, on accepting a sending command designating sending an E-mail by said sending command accepting means, is controlled by said agent manager for appending the agent parameters determining the behavior of the agent to the mail header or to an annexed main text of the E-mail for sending the E-mail,

wherein said agent manager sends an E-mail by a single ~~sets the agent from said mail~~ absent after sending means ~~the E-mail until a pre-set time elapses.~~

21. (currently amended): The apparatus ~~ø~~for sending an E-mail as claimed in claim 19~~20~~ wherein said agent manager automatically generates the agent parameters determining the behavior of the agent ~~includes the sending date and time information; and wherein said agent manager can append the agent parameters to the main text of an E-mail sent next by said mail sending means after lapse of a~~ the pre-set time as from the sending date and time based on the sending date and time information.

22. (currently amended): The apparatus ~~ø~~for sending an E-mail as claimed in claim 21~~20~~ wherein said agent manager ~~receivessends~~ sends an E-mail by the single agent parameters determining the agent behavior, automatically returned from the destination, so that said agent parameters can be annexed to the main text of an E-mail sent next by from said mail sending means.

23. (currently amended): The apparatus ~~ø~~of claim 19 wherein said sending command accepting means selectively accepts a sending command for designating sending of a single E-mail by a single agent or a sending command for designating sending of a plurality of E-mails by a single agent and wherein on accepting the sending command for designating for sending an E-mail by a single agent by said sending command accepting means, said agent manager annexes the as claimed in claim 21 wherein said agent parameters determining the agent behavior of the agent includes the sending date and time information; and wherein said agent manager can append the agent parameters to the main text of the an E-mail sent next by said mail sending means for sending the E-mail after lapse of the pre-set time from the sending date and time based on the sending date and time information.

24. (currently amended): The apparatus ~~ø~~for sending an E-mail as claimed in claim 19~~20~~ wherein said ~~agent manager automatically transmits the agent parameters annexed to the main text of the mail received by said reception means~~ are changed by learning function.

25. (currently amended): ~~A~~The apparatus for sending program supplying medium for an E-mail for supplying an E-mail sending program that can be read out and executed by a computer wherein

an E-mail as claimed in claim 20 wherein said agent is displayed on a screen and manager manages the behavior of the agent is managed by agent parameters, wherein

on accepting a sending command for commanding sending of an E-mail, agent parameters determining the behavior of the agent are annexed to the main text of the mail having an appended mail header for sending the E-mail by the agent parameters including an environmental information.

26. (currently amended): ~~The medium of claim 25 wherein a single E-mail is sent by a single agent.~~The apparatus for sending an E-mail as claimed in claim 20 wherein said sending command accepting means selectively accepts a sending command for designating sending of a single E-mail by a single agent or a sending command for designating sending of a plurality of E-mails by a single agent and wherein on accepting the sending command for designating sending an E-mail by a single agent, said agent manager annexes the agent parameters determining the agent behavior to the main text of the E-mail by said mail sending means for sending the E-mail.

27. (currently amended): ~~The medium of apparatus for sending an E-mail as claimed in claim—25 26 wherein when the agent parameters determining the behavior of the agent include the sending date and time information based on which the agent parameters can be annexed to the main text of an E-mail sent next after lapse of a pre-set time whose behavior is determined by the agent parameters is absent, said agent manager makes the agent which can be designated sending plural E-mails send the E-mail.~~

28. (currently amended): ~~The medium of claim 27 wherein by receiving~~An apparatus for sending an E-mail, comprising:

an agent manager for displaying an agent on a screen and for managing the behavior of the agent depending on agent parameters;

a sending command accepting means for accepting a sending command designating sending an E-mail; and

a mail sending means which, on accepting a sending command designating sending an E-mail by said sending command accepting means, is controlled by said agent manager for appending the agent parameters determining the behavior of the agent, it becomes possible to annex the agent parameters to the to the mail header or to an annexed main text of the E-mail sent nextfor sending the E-mail,

wherein said agent manager sets the agent absent after sending the E-mail until the agent parameters are sent back from a recipient of the E-mail.

29. (currently amended): ~~The medium of claim 25 wherein a sending command for designating sending of a single E-mail by a single agent and a sending command for designating sending of a plurality of E-mails by a single agent are selectively accepted and wherein on accepting the sending command for designating sending an E-mail by a single agent, the agent parameters determining the agent behavior are annexed to the main text of the E-mail for sending~~apparatus for sending an E-mail as claimed in claim 28 further comprising an agent parameters receiving means for receiving the agent parameters changed and sent back from the recipient of the E-mail.

30. (currently amended): ~~A receiving program supplying medium for an E-mail for supplying an E-mail receiving program that can be read out and executed by a computer wherein~~

~~on accepting a reception command designating reception of an E-mail, the E-mail is received, and the behavior of the agent is controlled responsive to agent parameters annexed to the main text of the received mail for displaying the agent on a screen.~~The apparatus for sending an E-mail as claimed in claim 29 wherein said agent manager manages an absent state or the agent by a flag showing the agent is absent or not.

31. (currently amended): ~~A sending/receiving program supplying medium for an E-mail for supplying an E-mail sending/receiving program that can be read out and executed by a computer wherein~~

~~an agent is displayed on a screen and the behavior of the agent is managed by agent parameters;~~The apparatus for sending an E-mail as claimed in claim 28 wherein said sending command accepting means selectively accepts a sending command for designating sending of a single E-mail by a single agent or a sending command for designating sending of a plurality of E-mails by a single agent and wherein on accepting the sending command for designating sending an E-mail by a single agent,

~~on accepting a sending command designating sending of an E-mail, said agent manager annexes the agent parameters determining the agent behavior of the agent are annexed to the main text of the mail having an appended mail header~~E-mail by said mail sending means for sending the E-mail;

~~an E-mail is received on accepting a reception command designating reception of an E-mail; and the behavior of an agent is controlled responsive to agent parameters annexed to the received main text of the mail for displaying the agent on a screen.~~

32. (currently amended): ~~The medium of claim 31 wherein a single E-mail is sent by a single agent apparatus for sending an E-mail as claimed in claim 31 wherein when the agent whose behavior is determined by the agent parameters is absent, said agent manager makes the agent which can be designated sending plural E-mails send the E-mail.~~

33. (currently amended): ~~The medium~~An apparatus for sending an E-mail of claim 31 wherein, comprising:

an agent manager for displaying an agent on a screen and for managing the behavior of the agent depending on agent parameters;

a sending command accepting means for accepting a sending command designating sending an E-mail; and

a mail sending means which, on accepting a sending command designating sending an E-mail by said sending command accepting means, is controlled by said agent manager for appending the agent parameters determining the behavior of the agent include the sending date and time information and can be annexed to the mail header or to an annexed main text of an E-mail sent next after lapse of pre-set time based on the sending date and time information.~~the E-mail for sending the E-mail,~~

wherein if the agent parameters are not sent back within a pre-set time, said agent manager automatically generates the agent parameters, and said agent manager sets the agent absent after the E-mail is sent until said agent manager automatically generates the agent parameters, if the agent parameters are sent back within the pre-set time, said agent manager sets the agent absent after the E-mail is sent until the agent parameters are sent back from a recipient of the E-mail;
and wherein a single E-mail is sent by a single agent.

34. (currently amended): ~~The medium of apparatus for sending an E-mail as claimed in claim 33 wherein, by further comprising an agent parameters receiving means for receiving the agent parameters determining the agent parameter automatically returned from the destination, the agent parameters can be annexed to the main text of the E-mail sent next~~changed and sent back from the recipient of the E-mail.

35. (currently amended): ~~The medium of claim 31 wherein a apparatus for sending command for designating sending an E-mail by a single agent and a sending command for designating sending plural E-mails by a single agent are selectively accepted and wherein on accepting the sending command for designating sending an E-mail by a single agent, the agent parameters determining the agent behavior are annexed to the main text of the E-mail for sending the E-mail.~~an E-mail as claimed in claim 33 wherein the agent parameters are changed by learning function.

36. (currently amended): ~~A method of E-mail transmission, comprising the steps of: providing an agent on a display unit, said agent configured for display on said display unit;~~

~~providing a plurality of agent parameters, said agent parameters configured to determine the behavior of said agent on said display unit;~~

~~detecting one or more events corresponding to one or more of said plurality of agent parameters; and~~

~~continuously updating said plurality of agent parameters in accordance with said detection step such that said behavior of said agent is continuously modified. The~~

apparatus for sending an E-mail as claimed in claim 33 wherein said agent manager manages an absent state of the agent by a flag showing the agent is absent or not.

37. (currently amended): ~~The method of claim 36 further including the step of detecting a send command for transmitting an E-mail.~~An E-mail sending program supplying medium for supplying an E-mail sending program that can be read out and executed by a computer wherein an agent is displayed on a screen and the behavior of the agent is managed by agent parameters;

and wherein on accepting a sending command for commanding sending of an E-mail, agent parameters determining the behavior of the agent are annexed to the main text of the mail having an appended mail header for sending the E-mail;

and wherein after the E-mail is sent, the agent is set to be absent until a pre-set time elapses.

38. (currently amended): ~~The method of claim 37 wherein when said send command is detected, said agent is no longer displayed on said display unit~~medium of claim 37 wherein the agent parameters determining the behavior of the agent are automatically generated after lapse of the pre-set time.

39. (currently amended): ~~The method~~medium of claim 37 wherein ~~when said send command is detected, said agent is temporarily displayed on said display unit as an animation~~a single E-mail is sent by a single agent.

40. (currently amended): ~~The method of claim 39 wherein said E-mail is displayed on said~~medium of claim 38 wherein the agent parameters determining the behavior of the agent include the sending date and time information and can be annexed to the main text of an E-mail sent next after lapse of the pre-set time based on the sending date and time information.

~~display unit and said animated agent retrieves said displayed E-mail.~~

41. (currently amended): ~~The method~~medium of claim 40 ~~wherein said animated agent with said retrieved E-mail is displayed as leaving the display unit for~~

~~delivery of said E-mail to a recipient~~37 wherein the agent parameters are changed by learning function.

42. (currently amended): ~~The method of claim 41 wherein said E-mail is configured with a predetermined time period such that when said agent is not displayed on the display unit as returning within said predetermined time period, automatically updating said agent parameters such that said agent is displayed in said display unit~~medium of claim 37 wherein the behavior of the agent is managed by the agent parameters including environmental information.

43. (currently amended): ~~The method of claim 42 wherein when said recipient receives said E-mail within said predetermined time period, automatically transmitting a return receipt such that said agent parameters are updated.~~The medium of claim 37 wherein a sending command for designating sending an E-mail by a single agent and a sending command for designating sending plural E-mails by a single agent are selectively accepted; and wherein on accepting the sending command for designating sending an E-mail by a single agent, the agent parameters determining the agent behavior are annexed to the main text of the E-mail for sending the E-mail.

44. (currently amended): ~~The method~~medium of claim 42 wherein when said recipient receives said E-mail within said predetermined time period, said agent is displayed on said display unit43 wherein when the agent whose behavior is determined by the agent parameters is absent, the E-mail is sent by the agent which can be designated sending plural E-mails.

45. (currently amended): ~~The method of claim 37 further including the step of encoding said 10 agent parameters and annexing said encoded agent parameters to said E-mail.~~An E-mail sending program supplying medium for supplying an E-mail sending program that can be read out and executed by a computer wherein an agent is displayed on a screen and the behavior of the agent is managed by agent parameters;

and wherein on accepting a sending command for commanding sending of an E-mail, agent parameters determining the behavior of the agent are annexed to the main text of the mail having an appended mail header for sending the E-mail;

and wherein after the E-mail is sent, the agent is set to be absent until the agent parameters are sent back from a recipient of the E-mail.

46. (currently amended): The ~~method~~medium of claim 37 ~~further including~~wherein the step of updating agent presence flag reflecting the state of display of said agent on said display unit~~agent parameters sent are changed and the agent parameters thus changed are sent back from the recipient.~~

47. (currently amended): The ~~method~~medium of claim 46~~45~~ wherein ~~said an absent state of the agent presence flag is set to 1 when said agent is displayed on said display unit, and further, wherein said agent presence flag is set to 0 when said agent is not displayed on said display unit~~is set by a flag showing the agent is absent or not.

48. (currently amended): ~~The method of claim 37 wherein said E-mail is displayed as a three-dimensional graphics representation of one of a letter, a postcard, or a package.~~The medium of claim 45 wherein a sending command for designating sending an E-mail by a single agent and a sending command for designating sending plural E-mails by a single agent are selectively accepted; and wherein on accepting the sending command for designating sending an E-mail by a single agent, the agent parameters determining the agent behavior are annexed to the main text of the E-mail for sending the E-mail.

49. (currently amended): ~~The method of claim 36 wherein with each detected event, said plurality of agent parameters is modified to update said behavior of said agent~~medium of claim 48 wherein when the agent whose behavior is determined by the agent parameters is absent, the E-mail is sent by the agent which can be designated sending plural E-mails.

50. (currently amended): ~~The method of claim 49 wherein said display of said agent is continuously modified on said display unit with the updated~~An E-mail sending program supplying medium for supplying an E-mail sending program that can be read out and executed by a computer wherein an agent is displayed on a screen and the behavior of said agent the agent is managed by agent parameters;

and wherein on accepting a sending command for commanding sending of an E-mail, agent parameters determining the behavior of the agent are annexed to the main text of the mail having an appended mail header for sending the E-mail;

and wherein if the agent parameters are not sent back within a pre-set time, the agent parameters are automatically generated, and the agent is set to be absent after the E-mail is sent until the agent parameters are automatically generated, if the agent parameters are sent back within the pre-set time, the agent is set to be absent after the E-mail is sent until the agent parameters are sent back from a recipient of the E-mail;

and wherein a single E-mail is sent by a single agent.

51. (currently amended): ~~The method~~medium of claim 36 ~~wherein said agent includes one of a pet or a postman~~50 wherein the agent parameters sent are changed and the agent parameters thus changed are sent back from the recipient.

52. (currently amended): ~~The method of claim 51 wherein said pet is configured to deliver a single E mail and said postman is configured to deliver multiple E mails~~medium of claim 50 wherein the agent parameters are changed by learning function.

53. (currently amended): ~~The method of claim 51 wherein said pet and said postman are configured for display as three dimensional graphical representation on said display unit.~~The medium of claim 50 wherein an absent state of the agent is set by a flag showing the agent is absent or not.

54. (currently amended): ~~An of E-mail transmission apparatus, comprising: a display unit configured for displaying an agent;~~
~~a memory for storing a plurality of agent parameters, said agent parameters configured to determine the behavior of said agent;~~

~~a controller for detecting one or more events corresponding to one or more of said plurality of agent parameters;~~

~~wherein said controller continuously update said plurality of agent parameters stored in said memory based on detecting said events such that said behavior of said agent is continuously modified.~~An E-mail sending program supplying medium for supplying an E-mail sending program that can be read out and executed by a computer wherein an agent is displayed on a screen and the behavior of the agent is managed by agent parameters;

and wherein on accepting a sending command for commanding sending of an E-mail, agent parameters determining the behavior of the agent are annexed to the main text of the mail having an appended mail header for sending the E-mail;

and wherein after the E-mail is sent, the agent is made not to send the E-mail;

and wherein a single E-mail is sent by a single agent.

55. (currently amended): ~~The apparatus of claim 54 wherein said controller is further configured to detect a send command for transmitting an E-mail.~~The medium of claim 54 wherein a sending command for designating sending an E-mail by a single agent and a sending command for designating sending plural E-mails by a single agent are selectively accepted; and wherein on accepting the sending command for designating sending an E-mail by a single agent, the agent parameters determining the agent behavior are annexed to the main text of the E-mail for sending the E-mail.

56. (currently amended): ~~The apparatus of claim 55 wherein when said send command is detected, said agent is no longer displayed on said display unit.~~A method for receiving an E-mail wherein on accepting a receiving command for commanding receiving of an E-mail, the E-mail with which agent parameters for managing a behavior of an agent are annexed is received;

and wherein the agent is displayed on a screen, the behavior of the agent is controlled according to the agent parameters annexed to the main text of the E-mail;

and wherein the agent parameters are automatically sent back to a sender of the E-mail.

57. (currently amended): ~~The apparatus of claim 55 wherein when said send command is detected, said agent is temporarily displayed on said display unit as an animation.~~The method for receiving an E-mail as claimed in claim 56 wherein the agent parameters annexed to the main text of the E-mail received are changed and automatically sent back to the sender of the E-mail.

58. (currently amended): ~~The apparatus of claim 55 wherein said E-mail is displayed on said display unit and said controller controls the display of said agent such that said animated agent is displayed as retrieving said E-mail.~~method for receiving an E-mail as claimed in claim 57 wherein the agent parameters annexed to the main text of the E-mail received are changed based on an event generated and automatically sent back to the sender of the E-mail.

59. (currently amended): ~~The apparatus of claim 58 wherein said controller controls the display of said animated agent such that said animated agent with said retrieved E-mail is displayed as leaving the display unit for delivery of said E-mail to a recipient.~~method for receiving an E-mail as claimed in claim 56 wherein the agent parameters are changed based on an interaction with an agent of the recipient and automatically sent back to the sender of the E-mail.

60. (currently amended): ~~The apparatus of~~method for receiving an E-mail as claimed in claim 59 wherein said processor appends a predetermined time period for said E-mail such that when said agent is not displayed on the display unit as returning within said predetermined time period, said processor automatically updates said agent parameters such that said agent is displayed in said display unit56 wherein the agent parameters are changed by learning function.

61. (currently amended): ~~The apparatus of claim 60 wherein when said recipient receives said E-mail within said predetermined time period, said controller detects a return receipt and updates said stored agent parameters.~~The method for receiving an E-mail as claimed in claim 56 wherein a receiving date and time of the E-mail is checked and it is judged whether it is within a lifetime period of the E-mail

or not based on a sending date and time information and a mail lifetime information included in the agent parameters annexed to the E-mail;

and wherein if it is within the lifetime period of the E-mail, the agent parameters changed is automatically sent back to the sender of the E-mail.

62. (currently amended): ~~The apparatus of claim 60 wherein when said recipient receives said E-mail within said predetermined time period, said controller displays said agent on said display unit.~~The method for receiving an E-mail as claimed in claim 56 wherein a message showing that the E-mail, with which the agent parameters for managing the behavior of the agent is annexed, is received is further automatically sent to the sender of the E-mail.

63. (currently amended): ~~The apparatus of claim 55 further including an encoder for encoding said agent parameters such that said controller annexes said encoded agent parameters to said E-mail.~~The method for receiving an E-mail as claimed in claim 56 wherein agent parameters of a recipient is changed based on an interaction with the agent of a sender.

64. (currently amended): ~~The apparatus of claim 55 wherein said controller is further configured to update an agent presence flag reflecting the state of display of said agent on said display unit.~~The method for receiving an E-mail as claimed in claim 56 wherein when the agent is displayed on the screen and the behavior of the agent is controlled according to the agent parameters annexed to the main text of the E-mail, if image data of the agent corresponding to the agent parameters is not stored at a recipient side, a pre-set character is displayed in place of the agent.

65. (currently amended): ~~The apparatus of claim 64 wherein said agent presence flag is set to 1 when said agent is displayed on said display unit, and further, wherein said agent presence flag is set to 0 when said agent is not displayed on said display unit.~~An apparatus for receiving an E-mail comprising:

a reception command accepting means for accepting a command for receiving an E-mail;

a reception means for receiving an E-mail with which agent parameters for managing a behavior of an agent are annexed on accepting the reception command commanding reception of the E-mail by said reception command accepting means;

an agent manager for controlling the behavior of the agent according to the agent parameters annexed to the main text of the E-mail received by said reception means for displaying the agent on a screen; and

an agent parameters replying means for automatically sending back the agent parameters to a sender of the E-mail.

66. (currently amended): The apparatus ~~of claim 64 wherein said controller is configured to control said display unit such that said E-mail is displayed as a three-dimensional graphics representation of one of a letter, a postcard, or a package~~ for receiving an E-mail as claimed in claim 65 further comprising:

an operation input means for inputting an operation to the agent displayed on the screen by a user; and

an agent parameters changing means for changing the agent parameters annexed to the main text of the E-mail received by said reception means according to the user operation by said operation input means;

wherein said agent parameters replying means automatically sends back the agent parameters changed by said agent parameters changing means to the sender of the E-mail.

67. (currently amended): The apparatus ~~for receiving an E-mail as claimed in claim 54~~ 66 wherein with each detected event, said controller modifies said plurality of agent parameters and updates said behavior of said agent said agent parameters changing means changes the agent parameters annexed to the main text of the E-mail received based on an event generated.

68. (currently amended): The apparatus ~~for receiving an E-mail as claimed in claim 67 wherein said controller continuously modifies the display of said agent on said display unit with the updated behavior of said~~ agent manager changes the agent parameters by said agent parameters changing means based on an

interaction with an agent of the recipient displayed on the screen and the agent of the sender whose behavior is controlled according to the agent parameters.

69. (currently amended): The apparatus ~~for receiving an E-mail as claimed in claim 54 wherein said agent includes one of a pet or a 10 postman~~68 wherein the agent parameters are changed by learning function.

70. (currently amended): ~~The apparatus of claim 69 wherein said controller is further configured such that said pet is configured to deliver a single E-mail and said postman is configured to deliver multiple E-mails.~~The apparatus for receiving an E-mail as claimed in claim 68 wherein said agent parameters replying means checks a receiving date and time of the E-mail and judges whether it is within a lifetime period of the E-mail or not based on a sending date and time information and a mail lifetime information included in the agent parameters annexed to the E-mail;

and wherein if it is within the lifetime period of the E-mail, said agent parameters replying means automatically sends back the agent parameters changed to the sender of the E-mail.

71. (currently amended): ~~The apparatus of claim 69 wherein said controller is further configured such that said pet and said postman are displayed as three dimensional graphical representation on said display unit.~~The apparatus for receiving an E-mail as claimed in claim 65 further comprising a confirmation message replying means for automatically sending back a message showing that the E-mail, with which the agent parameters for managing the behavior of the agent is annexed, is received to the sender of the E-mail.

72. (new): The apparatus for receiving an E-mail as claimed in claim 65 wherein said agent manager changes the agent parameters of a recipient based on an interaction with the agent of a sender.

73. (new): The apparatus for receiving an E-mail as claimed in claim 65 wherein said agent manager, when displaying the agent on the screen and controlling the behavior of the agent according to the agent parameters annexed to the main text

of the E-mail, if image data of the agent corresponding to the agent parameters is not stored at a recipient side, displays a pre-set character in place of the agent.

74. (new): An E-mail receiving program supplying medium for supplying an E-mail receiving program that can be read out and executed by a computer wherein on accepting a receiving command for commanding receiving of an E-mail, the E-mail with which agent parameters for managing a behavior of an agent are annexed is received;

and wherein the agent is displayed on a screen, the behavior of the agent is controlled according to the agent parameters annexed to the main text of the E-mail;

and wherein the agent parameters are automatically sent back to a sender of the E-mail.

75. (new): The medium of claim 74 wherein the agent parameters annexed to the main text of the E-mail received are changed and automatically sent back to the sender of the E-mail.

76. (new): The medium of claim 75 wherein the agent parameters annexed to the main text of the E-mail received are changed based on an event generated and automatically sent back to the sender of the E-mail.

77. (new): The medium of claim 74 wherein the agent parameters are changed based on an interaction with an agent of the recipient and automatically sent back to the sender of the E-mail.

78. (new): The medium of claim 75 wherein the agent parameters are changed by learning function.

79. (new): The medium of claim 75 wherein a receiving date and time of the E-mail is checked and it is judged whether it is within a lifetime period of the E-mail or not based on a sending date and time information and a mail lifetime information included in the agent parameters annexed to the E-mail;

and wherein if it is within the lifetime, period of the E-mail, the agent parameters changed is automatically sent back to the sender of the E-mail.

80. (new): The medium of claim 74 wherein a message showing that the E-mail, with which the agent parameters for managing the behavior of the agent is annexed, is received is further automatically sent to the sender of the E-mail.

81. (new): The medium of claim 74 wherein agent parameters of a recipient is changed based on an interaction with the agent of a sender.

82. (new): The medium of claim 74 wherein when the agent is displayed on the screen and the behavior of the agent is controlled according to the agent parameters annexed to the main text of the E-mail, if image data of the agent corresponding to the agent parameters is not stored at a recipient side, a pre-set character is displayed in place of the agent.